

(17)
THE
Countrey-Curate
TO THE
Countrey-People.

Endeavouring a plain account of
The Cross in Baptism,
Kneeling at the Holy Communion,
The Wedding-Ring, and
The Surplice.

With a brief
INTRODUCTION,
Shewing the
State of the TOLERATION.

Adapted to the meanest Capacities.

that have the Rule over you, and Submit
themselves, for they watch for your Souls, as they that
give an Account. Heb. 13. 17.

L O N D O N:

by W. B. for Rich. Wilkin, at the
Head in S. Paul's Church-yard. 1701.



T O T H E

Countrey-Clergy.

Reverend Brethren,

TIS universally noted, how the European Princes even now whilst they are a Treating of Peace do all make themselves ready to Battel; indeed, their Strife for Peace seems to be this, which of shou'd be the foremost in their Warlike Preparations. The profound Rules of Policy by which thus steer and move shall not be by me disputed. I will only say, that the Ecclesiastical Peace and amongst our selves is not to be sought for the like formidable rate, is not to be pursu'd in such an hostile manner; even the most oblique Conditions of Peace, tender'd from one Hand a Sword in the other, wou'd hardly be well; shou'd we appear stiff and sturdy to those whom we have to do, shou'd we resolve to Ground, or indeed but to maintain our own, we cou'd be no hope of an Accommodation upon Terms.

To the Countrey-Clergy.

Well, but then certainly, shou'd there be charitable Condescensions made to our Adversaries shou'd there be Ground given to them to win and draw them home to us; shou'd they then remain and keep themselves still at their unreasonable distance from us, they wou'd still be the more inexcusable.

And yet, alas! when the Countrey rung with the News of some kind Methods propos'd to that purpose in the Convocation, and that some Amendments (as to the Use of our Ceremonies especially) were likely to be made for Peace and Unity's sake you, my Brethren, must needs know what an unexpected and surprizing (not to say wild and extravagant) toward) entertainment, the very bare Report of these Matters met with among our Country Dissenters.

Why truly, instead of discovering a Temptation fit to be softn'd into thoughts of Peace, they gave us some shrew'd Signs as if they were in danger of being harden'd yet seven times more in their present state of the most obstinate Enmity. And from the very Condescensions reported to be made to them, they began to swell, and look big, and pride themselves, and to talk aloud and say, "That now the Bishops and Ministers of the Church of England begin to see themselves in their long-defended Errour, that they are a giving up their Cause, that their Eyes are open'd a little; and the more of all was a scornful Ejaculation, that they must in time see to amend all their other En-

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likewise; and that is as much as to say, whatever these wonderful People are pleased to give the hard Name to.

It cou'd not, my Brethren, be very grateful to us, to hear such kind Condescensions as were talk'd of, to be so much and wretchedly abus'd, even so far as to be made a new and terrible Argument against ourselves; or with whatever Patience we might endure such treatment, yet it was high time (as I well know many of you judge) that the People committed to our Charge shou'd be antidoted against the Poison, and that they shou'd be plainly taught, that the very (now said to be depending) Cause of our Ceremonies is no such defenceless and weak Cause as some wou'd have them believe it to be.

If it seem good to the Convocation to make any Alterations as to these Matters, I doubt not but they will profess to, and satisfie the World (as was done in a like Case) * that they are not enforc'd so to do by any Strength of Arguments convincing them of the Necessity of any such Alterations, but that they are fully persuaded in their Judgments that there is nothing in our Ceremonies contrary to the Word of God, or to sound Doctrine, and which a godly Man may not with a good Conscience submit unto, or which is not fairly defensible against any that oppose the same.

And in the mean time, my Brethren, I pray and beseech you candidly to interpret these very plain

* Preface to
the Common-
Prayer-Book.

To the Countrey-Clergy.

plain Discourses here offer'd to the Countrey-People in which indeed are no Heights or Depths, nothing but what I cou'd cloath in a down-Countrey-dress and bring within the reach of such narrow Capacities as you and I have mostly and generally to deal with. And I will only farther add, that I have some Hopes that I have so plainly dealt with them that I shall not be unto them a Barbarian, which was indeed the Design and Study of

My Reverend Brethren,

Aug. 20. 1701.

Your unworthy Brother,

and

most humble Servant,

T. H.

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T H E

Countrey-Curate

T O T H E

Countrey-People, &c.

The Introduction.

AR E there not such Scripture Commands as oblige us to obey them who have the Rule over us in *Church* as well as *State*? There are. For the fifth Commandment, *Honour Father, &c.* has ever been interpreted as commanding our Obedience to our *Ecclesiastical* as well as to *Civil* and *Natural Fathers*. And, *Let every Soul be subject to the Higher Powers, (the Ecclesiastical Powers excepted)* is a plain Command; and nothing more express than that of the Author to the Jews, *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and your selves, for they watch for your Souls, as they must give an Account.* Heb. 13. 17.

And that such Submission and Obedience is due these *Spiritual Watch-men*, is also clearly imply'd in their Names and Titles whereby in Scripture they are dignify'd and distinguish'd.

They are called ἑπισκοποι, *Bishops*, or *Overseers*, *Superintendents*, as the word has been render'd, *Acts* 20. They are styl'd ὀφθαλμοὶ, *Officers*, *Officers*; *1 Cor.* 4. 1. ἡγεῖσται, *Guides* or *Governours*; *1 Tim.* 5. 17. ἡγεῖσται, *Presidents*, *1 Tim.* 5. 17. Yea, imply'd that they are *Pastors*, ποιμαίνει τὰ ἑκκλησιαστικά, *John* 21. 16. and *Ambassadors* ὑπερβαλλόντων, *2 Cor.* 5. 20. All which Styles and Titles denote Authority and Power, Superiority and Rule, consequently that Submission and Obedience is due to them.

And accordingly very great and signal was the Obedience of the primitive Christians to these *Spiritual Rulers*, even when there was no other Sword but this *Sword of the Spirit*, the Word of God, to enforce it; yea, even when it was so far from being enforced by the Sword of the Civil Magistrate, it was sorely punished and persecuted by it.

For thus you must know that the Christian Church was govern'd for above three hundred Years by any *Kings* or *Queens* became its *nursing Fathers* or *nursing Mothers*; the Christian Flock following *Pastors*, and yielding Obedience to the Rules and Orders enacted by their *Spiritual Governours*, who jeopard'd their Lives even unto Death, and almost sure to dye Martyrs for it.

And it was by their Obedience to their *Spiritual Rulers*, that the Body of Christ which is his Church was so firmly united, and became such an ordered and well-disciplin'd Army, that not all the Temptations of Worldly Power, not all the Threatnings or Oppositions of its Adversaries, not all the Animosities,

Fires of its Persecutors cou'd ever prevail against it as to work its final overthrow. But more particu-

ly, *First*, Tho' the true *Church* of Christ can never be otherwise than a Friend to the *State*, teaching and enforcing with its spiritual Weapons all due Obedience to the Civil Magistrate, yet the *State* may be, and has but too often been, an Enemy to the *Church*; so it was in the beginning for some Hundreds of years, when the Civil Magistrates were so far from having the Sword in its Defence, that their Sword (I have just now hinted) was very rarely out of Bowels, even glutted and made drunk with Blood.

And when the *Shepherds* were smitten, then was a great Tryal that the *Flock* underwent, and (I need not say it too often) they bravely stood that day, and Lov'd, Honour'd and Obey'd their *Spiritual* *Rulers*, till Martyrdom and Death them did

But God forbid that such Bloody Days as these should not be shortned; I observe in the next place therefore that,

Secondly, The *State* is at other times a Friend to the *Church*, and we cannot disobey the *Governours* of the *Church*, but we must disobey *those* of the *State* too; as to say, *The Church is establish'd by Law*.

And then, our Obligations to Obedience are then laid upon us; and we must then needs be subject as we fear God, and as we reverence Man: and again, when the Laws of God in this Case are backt and fortify'd with Human Authority, it is every single Act of Disobedience to be no less than Two Crimes, and to be loaded with a Two-fold Guilt; for to the Guilt of Disobedience to our *spiritual*, is added the Guilt of Disobedience to our *civil* *Governours* likewise. But then again,

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Even in this prosperous and protected of the Church, when it is fenc'd with *Human* as well as with *Divine Laws*, it but too usually happens that by looking too much upon the former, many of us lose the sight, and grow perfectly blind as to the latter.

Such, I say, we many of us are, and thus we foolishly do, we are prone to fear Man more than we God, and to stand in awe of the *Temporal* more than of the *Spiritual Rod*; and consequently we become subject to our *Spiritual Rulers* for *Wrath* more than for *Conscience* sake: that is, we are ty'd and bound to our good Behaviour in this Case, not by any Conscientious Principle, but with the Fear of wrathful Punishments, such as pecuniary Mulcts, Imprisonments, and the like *Temporal Penalties*.

And thus the more that our *Human Laws* rely'd upon, the *Divine* are but too often so much the more disregarded, and when our Duty is most altogether enfor'd upon us with *Corporal Corrections*, we are apt to forget and grow insensible of all *Spiritual Chastisements*. And then,

Fourthly, If in such a Case there comes forth a *Toleration*, and lays some *Human Edicts* patient out of our Sight, it is that we may make an easier and better use of our Eyes; namely, that they may have them both in our Heads, open and liberty to look into the *Divine Statutes*; and assure themselves that the *Divine Laws* are all unalterably standing, and can stand alone without any *Human Support*; yea, they have stood, and can and will stand only when the *Laws of Man* have not been for ever when they have been against them; and therefore there's no great danger of their sinking, but when the *Laws of Man* as to their *Punishments* and *Penalties* do only Trim (as it were) and stand neither for nor against, as in the Case of the *Toleration*.

ffer me to speak words of plainness upon this Oc-
 n. I'll only ask in one Word, shou'd the good
 of *Parliament to punish Swearing and Cursing* be at
 time repeal'd, is it possible for you to think that
 Hellish Sins wou'd then and therefore become
 ul, or wou'd not the *Laws of God* be still in Force
 st them?

like manner, Tho' some *Acts of Parliament to punish*
Disobedience to our Spiritual Governours may be laid
 aside, yet what then? Does such Disobedience
 ore become Lawful, or are not the *Laws of God*
 force against it? They are, most assuredly they
 and we must needs be subject still, tho' not for
 al, yet for *Eternal Wrath*, and for *Conscience sake*.
 you may believe me that this is no Novel
 on, or lately invented in spight to the Toleration;
 was the true and good old Doctrine taught be-
 Toleration perhaps was so much as thought on.
 thus, in the Case of needless Separation from
 much of *England*, that very notorious Instance
 obedience to our *Spiritual Rulers*. As to this
 we thus read in that admirable *Collection of Cases*
 (before the Toleration) *to recover Dissenters, &c.*
 If there was a Law made which shou'd or-
 that wilful causeless Separation from the
 ish'd Church shou'd be allow'd and tole-
 that no Man shou'd be call'd to account
 yet nevertheless such a Separation wou'd be
 sin, wou'd still be a Sin against God; for no
 can Law can make that Lawful which God's
 hath forbidder. And again,
 shou'd all the Laws about Conformity and a-
 Conventicles be rescinded; shou'd the Ma-

“ gistrate indulge or connive at the separate Abuses, yet still this wou’d not make our joy with them not to be sinful.

* To which I will add a noted passage of a celebrated Authour. “ An Act of Parliament will deliver Dissenters from Temporal Punishment and might deliver them from the Sin of Disobedience to Civil Governours. But the Guilt of Sin wou’d remain still.-----So that this Project may cure the Estates, but cannot secure the Souls of dissenters; Schism will damn Men tho’ they thought it (*not only Tolerated, but*) establish’d by Act of Parliament.

And now, (tho’ I will not presume to insist on them, yet) I cannot but heartily wish, so far as Magistrates are concern’d in Qualifying (*at least unlearned*) Teachers of our Dissenters; for God we have liv’d to hear the want of Learning cry’d up, and boasted of by some as a chief and most wonderful Accomplishment of a Teacher; therefore, I say, so far as our Magistrates are concern’d in Qualifying such Teachers, and in legitimizing the Meeting-houses of our Dissenters, I can heartily wish that they wou’d use some little attention. I mean,

That they wou’d be pleas’d to let the People know that such and such Qualification Certificates are but their Security against the *Book*, and not against the *Bible*; that they may justify them at the *Sessions* or *Affizes*, but not at the *Day of Judgment*; that they are only Conditional indemnity against the *penal Laws of the Land*; that all the Security which they the Magistrates

* Vind. Def. of Dr. St. p. 457.

them in this Case is but against *some Statutes* are perfectly *Haman*, but God forbid that they should be misunderstood, as if they meant to indemnify them against the *Laws of God*.

I will not multiply words upon this occasion, I speak as to wise Men, to whom a word is sufficient.

And thus I have ventur'd to express my self pretty plain, and I think pretty plainly upon this nice and delicate Point.

And in my own Defence, I will still farther add that I am taught by the Learned Bishop of *Ely* in his *Work of the Ministry represented to his Clergy*.

The present Act of Indulgence, saith he, doth justify Men in their Separation, but only signifies the Punishments to which they were before: still they are in a state of Schism, out of which (you the Clergy) should endeavour to recover them by kind Persuasions and Arguments, which may work more upon them than all the penalties formerly inflicted, which made them obstinate, but did not convert them.

And these I hope are no rancorous or ill-natur'd sayings, but Malice its self may be defy'd to give them the least envy or ill-will to the Toleration.

The Truth is, whatsoever Tragical Outcries have been made, or whatsoever sad and formidable Storys have been rais'd to the contrary, (yet excepting as the best Laws in the World are liable to be abus'd, and I would not justify Abuses of any kind, and therefore I say all Abuses excepted) the penalties inflicted upon the Dissenters before the Toleration

ration were kindly design'd, and they were not otherwise design'd by all wise and sober Persons, that recover them out of a state of Schism and Disobedience to their Rulers both in Church and State, as Penalties now inflicted upon the prophane Person and upon the desperate Swearer, are very piously and charitably intended to deter them from those detestable Sins.

Well, But it seems that this (tho' never so aim'd, yet) prov'd but a very unsuccessful means, and that whatsoever Hypocrites and Dissemblers fill'd the Church withal, yet that it made but few real Converts. They wou'd not, in short, be thus drawn to their Duty, and therefore are we now to a Tryal whether they will have the Patience to be drawn to it, and whether they who wou'd not be drawn by *Rod*, will yet hear Reason, and Argument and Persuasion, and the very Word of God himself, Commanding them to *obey them that have the Rule over them.* Heb. 13. 17.

And shall we make no Conscience of this so plainly Commanded Duty? alas! the Tenderness of some Peoples Consciences (as the Vulgar Rule says the Heart does) lies on their left side: I know they are extremely nice and tender Consciences, and they *Obey their Spiritual Rulers*; but to disobey them, what they can venture to do without any Remorse or Scruple at all, and what their Consciences do not seem so much as once to trouble them for.

But you who are Masters of Servants and Fathers of Children, shou'd your Servants or Children disobey your Lawful Commands, or refuse to comply with the Orders of your Family, wou'd you commend and justify them for so doing? I trow not.

But then, all the Submission and dutiful Obedience which you expect and require from your Children

and Servants in your Family, the same shou'd you
 bow to your Superiours and Spiritual Fathers in the
 Church.

You may indeed very justly expect a cheerful and
 willing Obedience to all your Lawful Commands,
 from those over whom you have Authority, and there-
 fore that you yield the same Obedience to those who
 have Authority over you is but just and equal, and
 according to that Eternal Law of Equity of *Doing as*
you wou'd be done by.

I do not indeed plead for an absolute, blind O-
 bedience in all things unexceptionably and indiscri-
 minately; nay, but I do allow you to enquire and
 try your selves how the Law of God stands as to
 the Matter commanded by your Superiours. Yea,
 I heartily subscribe and consent to the Limitation,
 that you are not bound to obey your Superiours any
 farther than they command Lawful things.

And as for the Governours of the Church of *England*,
 I will be bold to affirm, that they require you not
 to obey them any farther than they can give you
 Scripture and Reason for what they command.

I am, that they are neither Fools nor Knaves,
 that they want neither Sense nor Conscience, that they
 do not command you to do what God has forbidden,
 nor leave undone what God has commanded; no,
 that in their whole Rule over us, they *Watch for our*
souls as they who must give an Account.

They know it, yes, they surely know it, that they
 are deeply engag'd, and are responsible for the
 care of our Souls, and that God will require our
 blood at their Hands, if our Souls perish thro' their
 Negligence and Misguidance; and therefore as we need not
 fear that they shou'd do it *ignorantly*, much
 less are we any cause to fear that they shou'd
 destroy those Souls for whom Christ dyed; no
 they

they cannot do it, but they must destroy their
Souls too.

The Summ of all is, In all Lawful things we
bound (tho' not now by any *punishing Act of Par-*
ment, yet still) by the *Laws of God* to obey them
have the Rule over us in Church as well as State
and nothing less than the Sinfulness of their Com-
mands can at any Time or in any Case warrant
our Disobedience; so that we must either say
we cannot obey them without Sin, or else 'tis cer-
tainly true that our not obeying them is a Sin; I
do affirm it again and again, that when and where
it is no Sin to Obey them, then and there it is
to disobey them.

But now then, in the behalf of the Rulers of
Church of *England*, I must have leave to ask,
is he that convinceth their Commands of Sin?
confessers indeed, you know, they have many: Falla-
cies have risen up amongst our selves against
and what say they? Why truly, they say that
Ceremonies enjoyn'd by them, particularly *The*
Baptism, *Kneeling at the Holy Communion*. *The*
Wedding Ring, and also *The Surplice*; All these, they
are all over Sinful and Popish; and therefore that
the things, of which you have a very plain
conviction candidly undertaken, and faithfully
pursu'd in the following Chapters.

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Howe's Censu
to Mr. Ho

C H A P. I.

Of the Cross in Baptism.

Celebrated * Writer among our Dissenters has been pleased to say, that, " Taking which side he will, could easily puzzle the most of plain People, and that are but of ordinary understanding in the controversy about Ceremonies ; and his ingenuous adversary has told us that he believes the same. will not say that any are a making the puzzling argument among the plain People ; but sure I am, never were our Ceremonies more question'd, never warmly talk'd of, than now they are among Country-folk. And that they may not talk by or at Random, or they know not what, my design is to give these honest plain People such a plain account of these Matters, as the most ordinary Country-man may understand, and such as the weakest need not fear being puzzled withal.

And indeed, that the old Say is renew'd among us, and that they are now taught afresh to object against our Ceremonies that they are Popish, and are used and abused in the Church of *Rome*.

They truly, and so are praying and preaching used and abused in the Church of *Rome* too ; but must praying or preaching be therefore said to be Popish ? If it be requir'd that I shou'd instance in Ceremonies, I am ready to add that the humble posture of kneeling, and lifting up the Hands and the Eyes in Prayer, have been abused in the Church of *Rome*, when they kneel and lifting up their Hands and Eyes in their Prayers to their Saints and their Images. But what ; must we not therefore Kneel ? must

Howe's Considerations of a Preface, &c. p. 5.

or to Mr. Howe by way of Reply. p. 15.

we not lift up our Hands and Eyes to Heaven
we pray unto God? Or are we Papists if we do

May we not use a good thing, if it has been ab
in Popery? May we not use Apparel, but must
with the antient Adamites go naked, because no
has been more abus'd, than the Popish *French*
abus'd Apparel by the many Monstrous Fash
of which they have been the wicked Inventers?

Yes certainly, we may wisely use, what not
Papists, but even Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Here
have abus'd the most grossly; we may Eat and D
to the Glory of God, tho' nothing has been
abus'd in the World than Meat and Drink
been.

But more particularly, to vindicate our Cerem
from the Imputation of Popery, I will plainly

First, That for great and wise Reasons they
used in the primitive Church, long before there
any such thing as Popery in the World. And

Secondly, I will farther shew, that in process of
they were indeed (as they still are) very grossly a
in the Church of *Rome*. But then,

Thirdly, and Lastly, I will also plainly shew
all these Abuses (which were all the Popery of
were done away at the Reformation of the C
of *England*; and that they are here with us, rest
and restor'd to their pure primitive use again.
therefore,

First, To begin with the *Cross* in *Baptism*.
for great and wise Reasons used in the pri
Church, long before there was any such thing
pery in the World.

And it was an Argument of the undaunted Co
and Bravery of these first and best Christians
were not to be made ashamed of the Cross of C
tho' they were loaded with contempt, and
the Common Theme and Subject of the greater
rision and Scorn upon this very Account.

For this it was, that *they had Tryal of cruel Mockings*, as the Apostle expresseth it, *Heb. 11. 36.* For this they were revil'd and defam'd, *made as the Filth of the World*, and the *Off-scouring of all things*, *1 Cor. 4. 12.* For this they were jeer'd and flouted at, call'd Fops and Ideots, Fools and Madmen.

What ! to own a *Crucify'd Person* to be *their Lord and Saviour* ! to worship *him for a God who was hanged upon a Tree* ! This was to the *Jews a Stumbling-block*, and to the *Greeks Foolishness*. This to the Enemies of the Cross was made a matter of Contempt and malicious Railery : And thus were the first Christians despis'd and disgrac'd, abus'd and revil'd, as a pack of mere Simpletons, that had no Brains in their Heads, or very distracted ones.

And this was the respect and entertainment that the Doctrine of the Cross then met with in the World ; and to become a Disciple of the Crucify'd Jesus, was the ready way to be expos'd thus.

And it was a mighty hard Tryal, and they needed to be well arm'd who were to undergo it. Truly, above all things, it was necessary for the then Christians to be stedfast in this Faith, to be stout and resolute, and even harden'd in their Belief of Christ Crucify'd.

And accordingly, in this very point they were perfect Champions and Hero's, fearlessly glory'd in the Cross of our Lord Jesus, and bravely own'd him, not only covertly and in the Night, as *Nicodemus* did, not only in their Privacies and among their Friends and Confidants, but in the sight and hearing of their Enemies ; and to let the World even publicly see that they were not ashamed of the Cross of Christ, when they became his Disciples *they had the Sign of it made upon their Foreheads*,

They had well and thoroughly consider'd the dreadful import and meaning of those words of our Lord,
Whosoever shall deny me before Men, him will I deny before

before my Father which is in Heaven, Mat. 10. 33. and whosoever shall be ashamed of me, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the Glory of the Father with the Holy Angels, Mark 8. 38.

The full Sense of which words is sufficiently plain, and needs not to be represented in more formidable Expressions ; for of whom the Son of Man shall be ashamed at the last Day, Shame, nothing but Shame, Shame, burning Shame and Confusion of Face will be their eternal Portion.

And this is the terrible Doom which the first good Christians took so much care to avoid, manfully fighting under the Banner of Christ's Cross, and standing the shock undauntedly of all the cruel Mockings of their Adversaries, yea, and chusing to die a Thousand Deaths (if possible) rather than be ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ Crucify'd.

'Tis true, 'tis very true, they were the Disciples of a Crucify'd Jesus, and they car'd not who knew it ; tho' the World thought it in their Foolishness, and mock'd and Martyr'd them for't, yet they wou'd not be afraid or ashamed to own it for all that, but confess it freely and gallantly to the very Faces of their Adversaries, in so much that the Sign of the Cross was made a Badge of their Profession, and a Token of their Christianity.

And in short, 'Tis very well known that the Forehead is the proper Seat of Shame and Blushing, as we have a Common Expression to denote an impudent Fellow, that he has rubb'd and harden'd his Forehead ; that is, he is not easily to be made ashamed, he is not readily to be made to blush.

And thus the Forehead being the proper Seat of Shame, therefore, I say, the first good Christians to make it known to all the mocking World, that they were not to be made ashamed of the Cross of Christ, they had the Sign of it made upon their Foreheads.

And

And accordingly their making the Sign of the Cross upon their Foreheads is mention'd by * *Ter- tullian* as a confirm'd Custom even in his time; † *Origen* speaks of it as of a well known matter, and * *St. Basil* affirms it to be an antient Custom of the Church, deriv'd from the very times of the *Apostles*; and the mention of this Ceremony is very Common and frequent in the writings of *St. Cyprian*, *St. Ambrose*, *St. Austin*. † *St. Austin* says of himself, that he was so far from being asham'd of the Cross of Christ, that he carry'd it on his Forehead: and to set forth the Bravery of the Christian in this very Case, He is not * (saith he) asham'd of the Cross of Christ, but imprints it on his Forehead, the Seat of Shamefac'dness. Let us not be asham'd of Christ crucify'd, says *St. Cyril*, but let the † Sign of the Cross confidently made with the Finger on the Forehead. And * *S. Hierom's* boast is well known, viz. That he was a Christian, and a Son of Christian Parents, and that he did carry on his Forehead the Banner of the Cross.

If I was minded to enlarge, I cou'd even tire you with Testimonies of this Nature, but I forbear, having pretty plainly shew'd you, that (as the Thirtieth Canon of our Church expresses it) the use of the Sign of the Cross in Baptism was held in the primitive Church, as well by the Greeks as the Latins, with one consent and great applause. The primitive Christians thereby making an outward Profession even to the astonishment of the heathen, that they were not asham'd to acknowledge him for their Lord and Saviour, who died for them upon the Cross. And this is a just Account of this matter, this was the true intent and meaning of that laudable Rite in the primitive Church: and thus they nobly Confess the

De Cron. Mil.
cap. 27.

† Homil. 2. in Psal. 38.

* De Spirit.

† In Psal. 141.

* In Galac. 6. 14.

Gregorius Catech. 13.

* Pref. in Joh. Tom. 3. p. 44.

Crucify'd Jesus, not only with their *Words* but with their *Actions*.

And here I cou'd shew by the *By*, that the Laudable Ceremony of *Bowing at the Name of Jesus* became a more general Custom among the primitive Christians upon a like account. It was when the Arians deny'd the *Godhead of the Son*, when they wou'd own our Lord for no more than a *man*. It was, I say, in Opposition to this damnable Arian Heresy, that the good Christians in those early days took all ways and all occasions to testify their Belief, that *The Godhead of the Father and of the Son was all one*. And to this end it was that they never fail'd to *bow at the name of Jesus*. Letting the World see that they own'd and acknowledg'd him to be *perfect God*, as well as *perfect Man*. For by this adoring Act of bowing at his Name, they shew'd that *he was to be worshipped*, and consequently that *he was God, and Equal to the Father as touching his Godhead*.

And thus, As by their *bowing at the Name of Jesus* they let the World see that they own'd him to be *God* in Opposition to the Arians, so by the *Sign of the Cross* (which I am now speaking of) they let the World see that they were not asham'd of the *Cross of Christ* in Opposition to all the Infidel Enemies of the *Cross*.

And still farther, As this Sign was to let their Enemies see that they were not asham'd of the *Cross*, so likewise was it intended to bring to Remembrance of the Persons Baptized their Baptismal Engagements.

As it is usual for Oaths, and Vows, and Covenants to be attended with some solemn Action or Ceremony, by way of Testimony and Remembrance.

For so, When *Abraham* was about to make his Servant swear to him, he wou'd have him put his hand under his Thigh, which was a token of Subjection

did as it were remember him that he was already Abraham's Servant, and that consequently now that was about to be his *sworn* Servant, he wou'd be the faster, and be the more strongly engag'd to Duty and fidelity, *Gen. 24. 2, 3.*

And so again, when *Jacob* was about to make his Son *Joseph* swear to him, *Put I pray thee*, said he, *Hand under my Thigh*, which (as in the former instance) was a Token of Subjection, and did as it were remember him that he was already *Jacob's* Son, and that as a Son he was oblig'd to all due Obedience to his Father, and consequently that he wou'd be doubly so, when he shou'd be likewise engag'd by an Oath to it, *Gen. 47. 29, 31.*

When *Abraham* and *Abimelech* made both of them a Covenant, and sware both of them to one another, *Abraham* gave to *Abimelech* seven Ewe Lambs by way of Memorial and Witness, *Gen. 21. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.* And when *Joshua* made a Covenant with the people, he set up a great Stone for a Witness, *Josh. 24. 26, 27.*

And thus when the Antients sware to and Covenanted with one another, to bear Testimony and add Solemnity to their Oaths and Covenants, they usually accompan'd with Oblations and Sacri-

And I will only farther observe those solemn Ceremonies used among our selves at the taking of an Oath, which are *to lay the Hand upon*, and *to kiss the Gospels*. And I verily believe, that an Oath so solemnly taken is commonly understood to be the more solemn and binding, and we are thereby render'd the more careful to observe it.

And in a Resembling manner is our Baptismal Vow or Covenant accompany'd with the *Sign of the Cross*, to know the Obligations which we then take upon ourselves to be the Disciples and Followers of the *Christ Jesus*.

And thus, If it was no Popery or Fault in *Abraham*, in *Jacob*, in *Joshua*, and in the wisest Antients to have Oaths and Covenants attended with so significant Ceremonies; and if it be no Popery or Fault in the State of *England*, to require that an Oath in like manner shall be guarded with Ceremonies, then certainly neither is it any Popery or Fault in the Church of *England*, to require that our Baptismal Vow shall be likewise attended with a truly noble and venerable Ceremony.

And be pleased to take notice of this one thing, that as *Laying the Hand upon, and kissing the Bible*, is but only a part of the Oath, but only dreadful Ceremonies attending it, to awe us and to make us the more mindful of what we swear; so neither is *the Sign of the Cross* any part of our Baptismal Vow, but only a Solemn Ceremony attending it by way of Remembrance, we should never forget our Baptismal Engagements.

And thus does *the Sign of the Cross in Baptism* inform ourselves as well as inform our Enemies. It informs us, that we *must not* be ashamed of the Cross of Christ; and it informs our Enemies, that we *are not*, we should not be ashamed of it.

And now, good People, suppose (and God grant that you may never know the Case any other way than by Supposition, suppose, I say) that you live in a time and place, where it was Death by Law to be a Christian, and that you were brought before the Judges (as the primitive Christians were frequently to be try'd for your Lives upon this very Question, *whether Christians or no Christians*). Should you manfully confess it, and own your selves Christians, tho' you were sure to dye for it; yea, to be burnt at a Stake for it: And at the same time should you *the Sign of the Cross upon your Foreheads*, to testify it to the very Eyes as well as to the Ears of your Adversaries, that you were not ashamed of your Profession: V

would this be Popery do you think? and would it not
 be an Argument of the greatest Gallantry in
 the World? would it not be a Noble Instance of a
 wonderful Courage in the Cause of Christ?
 would not all that shou'd hear of it admire and
 that it was heroically and bravely done? and
 would not Chronicles and Martyrologies record it to
 posterity? I am sure shou'd any say that such a noble
 action was Popery, they would give a greater Com-
 mendation to Popery than it will ever deserve.

Well: But having given you this plain account of
 the true intent and meaning of the Usage of this
 Ceremony in the primitive Church, long before there
 was any such thing as Popery in the World.

Now, I will now proceed briefly to shew you,
 in process of time it was indeed (as it still is) very
 abused in the Church of Rome.

There is not to say any thing of the *Crucifixes*, and of
 the *adoration* given to them, or of the *formal Prayers*
 made to them in that Church; not to trouble you
 with any long account of their Idolatrous Service on
 the *Day of the Invention of the Cross*; nor of their
 Idolatrous Form of *Consecrating a new Cross*, nor of their
 scandalously Idolatrous *Good-Friday Service*, in
 which indeed there is most shameful work made
 about the *Woolen Cross*. The Priest, after a deal of ridicu-
 lous adoration, crying out, *Behold the Wood of the Cross*,
 himself shewing the way, by *Kissing*
 kneeling to it again and again; and then the
 Clergy and Laity (Two after Two) in like
 manner adoring it, and the Quire singing (*Crucem*
adoramus, Domine) *we adore thy Cross, O Lord*.

To trouble you, I say, with this their down-
 right and most abominable Idolatry in worshipping
 the *Crosses of Wood*, I shall confine my self to a
 short account of their *abuse of the Sign of the Cross* in

And

And this (with many other Abuses in Baptism) admirably well discover'd to us out of the *Common ritual* and *Pastorale*, by the Author of *the Case of the Church of England's Symbolizing*, &c.

" In their Administration of Infant-Baptism
 " after the Priest has blown three soft and gentle
 " upon the Infant's Face (which is * sometimes
 " Cross-ways) saying, (as if the Devil was in't
 " out of this Infant, O Unclean Spirit; after th
 " say, the Priest with his Thumb makes the Sig
 " the Cross upon the Infant's Forehead and Br
 " Or (as we find in the *Pastorale*) the Priest cr
 " the Child's Forehead, saith, I sign thee in the
 " head in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ
 " thou may'st trust in him: And then the Priest
 " seth the Child's Eyes, saying, I bless thine
 " that thou may'st see his Brightness: Then he cr
 " his Ears, saying, I bless thine Ears, that thou
 " hear the Word of his Truth: Then he cr
 " his Nostrils, saying, I bless thy Nostrils, that
 " may'st smell his Sweetness: Then his Breast, f
 " I bless thy Breast, that thou may'st believe in
 " Then his Shoulders, saying, I bless thy Sho
 " that thou may'st bear the Yoke of his Service
 " the Priest crosseth the Child's Mouth, saying,
 " thy Mouth, that thou may'st confess him wh
 " and reigneth, &c.

" After this, in the common Ritual follow
 " Benediction of Salt, which is perform'd
 " abundance of Crossings and Conjurations;
 " Priest putting a little of this Salt into the
 " Mouth, saith, Take thou the Salt of Wisdom
 " Not long after the Priest signs the Infant
 " with his Thumb on the Forehead, and da
 " Devil, he saith, This Sign of the Cross w

* See the *Pastorale*.

to this Child's Forehead, thou cursed Devil, needest thou to violate.

and after a great deal of strange work more, the Priest dips his Thumb in Oyl, and anoints the Infant with it in his Breast, and betwixt the Shoulders in the Figure of a Cross, saying, I anoint thee with the Oyl of Salvation, &c.

and soon after this, he does indeed Baptize the Infant with Water; but then immediately follows with Chrysm, or holy Ointment, in which the Priest dips his Thumb, and anoints the Infant upon the Forehead in the Figure of a Cross, praying that God will anoint him with the Chrysm of Salvation, &c.

thus, and more, and worse than thus, (for we have account of more crossing still in the *Pastor* as the Sign of the Cross in Baptism abus'd in the Church of *Rome*, as it still is most horribly; assure my self, that you can now very easily distinguish between the *pious and laudable Use* of this Ceremony in the *primitive*, and these *abominable abuses* in the *Romish Church*. Well! but now then,

Shew me, and lastly, I shall plainly shew you that these *Abuses*, which were all the *Popery* of it, were cut away at the *Reformation of the Church of England*; and that it is here with us *Reform'd* and in its pure *primitive Use* again.

And this is no more than what you daily see with your Eyes, and hear with your Ears. You see no wooden Crosses in our Churches, I am sure; there we have no wooden Crosses, nor are any such senseless Customs us'd or Kiss'd or Kneel'd to by us; nor did you ever see any Minister of the Church of *England* put out to you to behold the Wood of the Cross, and so on.

Never speak to the Cross (as the Priests of the Church of *Rome* do) as to Christ himself, O Holy Father, our only Hope; nor do we ever pray to the Cross

(as they do) to give People increase of Grace, or out their Sins. No, but we can truly and safely (as did *Octavius* the Christian in *Actus*) *Cruces nec colimus nec optamus*, that we neither worship any Crosses, nor desire any.

Nay, and not only the Popish and Idolatrous Worship of the Wooden Cross, but even all the Abuses of the Sign of the Cross in Baptism, away from among us too.

You never see Us in the Administration of Baptism blowing in the Child's Face Cross-ways, sing his Eyes, or Ears, or Nostrils, or Throat, or Throat, or Mouth; nor do we exorcise any Crossings, or anoint any Child in the Breast, or his Shoulders, or on the Crown of the Head with Ointment in the figure of a Cross.

No, These are the Popery of this Ceremony are the Popish Abuses of it in the Church and we do not, you know that we do not, for there is none of all this Popery, nor the name or title of it remains with it. We only use it as it was commendably used in the primitive Church and for the same great and wise Reasons too.

To remember us that we *must* not be ashamed of the Cross of Christ, and to testify to the enemies of the Cross that we are not ashamed, but make bold in despite of all their reproaches own our-selves the Disciples of a Crucify'd Jesus, that we are daring to confess him who dyed upon the Cross, before all the World, *not only with our Words but with our Actions*.

And for a Conclusion of this whole matter what comfortable words our Saviour Christ says *Mat. 10. 32. Whosoever shall confess me before men, I will also confess him before my Father which is in Heaven*.

And so much of the Cross in Baptism

C H A P. II.

Kneeling at the Holy Communion.

Our Lord spake a Parable to this purpose,
 that *Men ought always to pray*, Luk. 18. 1. yea,
 when he spake it plainly too, and without a
 Parable, that we should *pray always*, Luk. 21. 36. I
 think that he yet said nothing of the Posture in
 which we would have us to pray; for he very well
 knew that if Men cou'd but once be brought to a
 higher Degree of Devotion, a conformably devout
 Posture would be a sure and certain consequence.
 Indeed, 'Tis certainly evident from the Ex-
 ample of the whole devout World, that never did
 a devout Soul fail of humbling the Body into
 the Posture of Devotion.

When our Lord said *let us worship and fall down, and kneel before
 our Maker*, said the devout Psalmist, *Psal. 95.*
*The Holy Men of old did so, They bowed
 before the High God*, as it is exprest *Micah. 6.*
Our Lord himself fell on his face and prayed,
and he kneeled down and prayed, Luk. 22. 41.
 We will only farther take notice, that *Kneeling*
 is constantly us'd by the devout Servants of
 God in their *praying posture*, that even *praying* it self
 is *Kneeling*; for so when St. Paul speaks
 unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;
 he says he, *I bow my Knees unto the Father
 and Jesus Christ, Ephes. 3. 14. He bowed*
 as much as to say that he *prayed*.

So constantly have all good People said
 in this Posture, that our Blessed Lord
 is able to say any thing of the Posture,
 might us to pray always.
 as when he taught us to pray, he thought
 to say any thing of the praying Posture,

so likewise when he enjoyn'd us to receive the Sacrament of his Body and Blood, we reasonably think that he thought it needles any thing of the Posture of receiving.

Indeed, in all the Accounts of our Lord's giving this Sacrament, given by St. *Matthew*, by St. *Mark*, Mar. 14. by St. *Luke*, Luk. 22. by St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. 11. there is not the least hint of any particular Gesture; our Lord taking it without any ceremony for granted, that if a truly devout Person is going unto his God, even in his Common Prayer, he will reverently kneel upon his Knees, much more will he think himself oblig'd to an adoring Posture when he makes that nearest, and greatest, and most direct Approach unto his God at the Altar.

And certainly, if *at the Name of Jesus* shall bow, no Knee will refuse to do so, and the Name is joyn'd in Prayer with his Body to preserve our Bodys and Souls unto Life.

Well! but tho' our Lord has not by any means taught us in what Posture we shall receive the Sacrament, some have been bold to say that he has taught us *ample* taught us to receive it *sitting*. To answer,

First, that tho' our Lord instituted this Sacrament at the paschal Supper, yet *sitting* was not the Posture of that Countrey, but rather *lying* down, as they laid along on their sides upon Beds or Couches; the first place the Master of the Feast, the Chief Guest, with his Head up to the Wall, as 'tis expressly said of St. *John*, that he lay at the *Master's Bosom*, and that he *leaned on his Bosom*, John 13. 23, 25, and John 21. 20.

And even where we read in our Scriptures that Jesus *sat down to Supper* with the twelve, I do assure you that the Original was

Arise) signifies that *he lay down*; and this was our
 our's Posture at the paschal Supper, according to
 then custom of the Jews at Meals. (*'Arise*) he
 down to Supper with the Twelve. But then,
 Secondly, It was at the close of the paschal Supper
 our Blessed Lord first instituted and administred
 the Apostles the Holy Sacrament of his Body and
 and, and when he had taken Bread to that End,
 blessed it, say the Evangelists St. *Matthew* and
 Mark, *Mat. 26. 26. Mark 14. 22. And he gave thanks,*
 St. *Luke* and St. *Paul, Luke 22. 19. 1 Cor. 11. 24.*
 at now then, let me beseech you to consider,
 it ever be imagin'd of our dearest and devoutest
 that he blessed and gave thanks in the same Posture
 which he had been eating?

You know that 'tis a pious Custom among our
 after our Meals to give God thanks, or (as we
 want to express it) to say *Grace*.

at now when I say, that after our Meals we give
 thanks, I do not, cannot mean that we give
 thanks in the same Posture in which we eat our
 is no, for tho' sitting, and perhaps with our Hats on, be
 common Country-Table-Gesture, yet we rise up
 uncover our Heads to give thanks, and devoutly stand
 the Table whilst the Grace is a saying.

at therefore in short, as when you hear it said
 after our Meals we give God thanks, you cannot
 stand the words that we give God thanks in the

words, *Ἀνακλιθε, κατανέθε, συνανέθε, ἀνακλί-*
νατε—*Arise*, which occur in *Mat. 9. 10. and 26, 7, 20.*
4. 1. and 5. 22. and 8. 6. and 11. 2. and 14. 18. and 16. 14.
23, and 22. 27. John 6. 10, and 12, 2, and 13, 12. and
 other places, and are express'd in our English Tran-
 by sitting or sitting down, they properly signify lying
 leaning, lying along or lying on one side; and so shou'd be
 Mr. Edwards's learned Discourse of the Excellency and
 of the Holy Scriptures. p. 547.

same posture in which we eat our Meals; even when it is said of our Lord, That after the Passover Supper, when he had taken Bread, he blessed and gave thanks, you must not understand the words, that he blessed and gave thanks in the same Posture in which he did eat that Supper.

No, certainly; for whatever, how rude and irreverent soever, *the manner of some may be*, yet it was our Saviour's way; He had no such custom to go unto or to praise his Father any otherwise, than the humblest Postures of Adoration, *Mat. 26. Luke 22. 41.*

And as for the Apostles themselves, who were and the only then Communicants, it cannot enter into my thoughts that they were such a rude, unbecomingly, slovenly Crew, as to continue in their Eating posture, when their great Lord and Master was in Devotion, blessing and giving Thanks. And again,

Thirdly, When some such Abuses and Rudeness crept into the *Corinthian Church*, in this very Case celebrating the Lord's Supper, insomuch that they made no difference between that sacred Feast, and their common Meals, *not discerning the Lord's Body*, as the Apostle expresses it, *1 Cor. 11. 29.* What! says the Apostle, very smartly reprimanding them, *Have ye not Houses to Eat and to Drink in? or despise ye the Church of God?*

By which words he very plainly intimates the most sacred and solemn Feast *in the Church*; that is to say, the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament is to be eaten and drunken after a more religious solemn manner than Men eat and drink in their *Houses*.

And indeed, to use That as common which his Holy Church hath sanctify'd and hallow'd, is to put an affront upon God himself, and is to *despise* (as the Apostle words it) what God has lighted to honour.

And this is the great and heavy Crime which God laid to the Charge of those prophane People who said, *that the Table of the Lord is contemptible*, Malachi 1. 7.

Fourthly, As for the Idol-gods of the Heathens indeed, who were as blind to external as to internal Reverence; 'tis no such wonder if they were worshipp'd with irreverence and slight, and in the *undecent posture* *Sitting*, as * *Tertullian* tells us of the Nations, That they worshipp'd their Images *Sitting*. And so the *Jews* themselves in their Idolatrous Sacrifices, when they had offer'd Burnt-offerings, and Peace-offerings, to the Golden Calf, 'tis expressly said, That they *sat down* to eat and drink what they had offer'd, *Exod.* 32. 6. And so we read of *Sitting* in the Idol's Temple, *Isa.* 8. 10.

And thus, thus shamefully and irreverently did the Idolatrous Worshippers demean themselves in the Temples, and at the Altars of their Idols.

But this was not the manner of religious and good People, the devout Worshippers of the True God in the Temple, and at his Altar; witness King *Solomon*, whom when he had been praying before the Altar of the Temple of God at *Jerusalem*, we plainly read *he arose from before the Altar, from kneeling upon his knees*, 1 King. 8. 54.

And now having thus far clear'd the way, I will shew of our way and manner of receiving Holy Communion *Kneeling*, (as I shew'd of the same in Baptism in the foregoing Chapter) *viz.*

That it was their way and manner of Receiving it in the Primitive Church, long before there was any such thing as Popery in the World. But

And lastly, I will plainly shew, that in process of time it was indeed (as it still is) very much abus'd in the Church of *Rome*. But then,

Thirdly, and Lastly, I will plainly shew, That all these Abuses (which were all the Popery of it) were done away at the Reformation of the Church of England, and that it is here with us Reform'd to it's pure Primitive use again.

First, Our way and manner of receiving the Holy Communion Kneeling, was their way and manner of receiving it in the Primitive Church, long before there was any such thing as Popery in the World.

*Indeed their whole tune of Communicating was spent in Prayers and Praises, and at these we are sure to find them upon their Knees, or devoutly standing with fear and trembling, with silence and down-cast Eyes, as * St. Chrysostom speaks.*

*Yea, when they represented Jesus Christ Crucified in the Holy Symbols of his Body and Blood; the very meaning of the Representation it self was all perfect and true Prayer, even as if they had *vocally* prayed for the forgiveness of their Sins through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ.*

*And that the Ancient Church so understood that Symbolical Representation, the very learned Mr. Mede assures us, saying, " That which we in all our Prayer " and Thanksgiving do *vocally*, when we say (per-
" *suum Christum Dominum nostrum*) through Jesus Christ
" our Lord, the Ancient Church in her publick
" solemn Service did *visibly* by representing Christ
" the Symbols of his Body and Blood.*

He means, That when the Primitive Communicants by breaking Bread, and pouring out Wine, represented to God Christ's Body broken, and his Blood shed for the remission of their Sins: They signified much by their Actions, as if they had begg'd of God on plain Terms for the Merit of Christ's Sufferings to pardon all their Sins.

* Homil. de eucharistiis.

† Upon Malachi i. ii.

And thus when (at the *sursum Corda*) they lifted up their hearts unto God in the Sacrament, they did in effect lift up their hearts unto God in Prayer, and for this Cause (as said the Apostle) *they bowed their Knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Again, *When they thus shewed forth the Lord's Death,* as the Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. 11. 26. and were partakers of these Holy Mysteries in remembrance of him, symbolically commemorating the exceeding great Love of our Master and only Saviour Jesus Christ thus dying for us, and even humbling himself to the Death of the Cross for us miserable Sinners. This perpetual Memory of his precious Death brought likewise to their remembrance their own crying Sins, which were the sad occasion of it. And then their remembring that he died for their Sins, made the remembrance of these very grievous unto them, and they were heartily sorry for these their misdoings: They acknowledg'd and bewail'd their manifold Sins and Wickedness, and as it was meet, right, and their bounden Duty, they made their humble Confessions to Almighty God, *meekly kneeling upon their Knees.*

And thus the Wisemen's *falling down and worshipping* our Saviour, is recommended, as a suitable Pattern to every devout Communicant, by St. * *Chrysostom.*

And there's an Ancient Homily goes under the name of † *Origen*, wherein *the Centurion's humility* is recommended to the Communicant for his imitation.

The Celebrated words of St. * *Augustine* (*Nemo manducabit nisi prius adoraverit*) are an Evidence past contradiction, that the Holy Sacrament was receiv'd in a gesture of *Adoration.*

† *St. Ambrose* plainly and expressly speaks of *Adoration* at the Sacrament.

Homil. 24. in 1 Cor.
Serm. in Psal. 98.

† *Origen* in divers. Homil. 3.
† *De Spir. Sanct. L. 3. C. 12.*

And a *Sitting* posture of Adoration is an instance of irreverence cry'd out upon by † *Tertullian* with a just indignation.

* *St. Cyril's* direction to the Communicant is so very express, and so well known, that it shall conclude these Testimonies from Antiquity. His direction then to the Communicant is, To receive the Sacrament *Bowing down after the manner of those who worship and adore* (κύπτων καὶ τρέπων προσκυλήσεως καὶ σεβασματιῶ.)

And all this was long before that hard to be understood, and yet harder to be believ'd thing call'd Transubstantiation was ever heard of in the World; they had no such senseless thoughts of the Bread then, as it became the very Lord himself, and was therefore to be ador'd.

No, there was no such Idolatrous *Bread-worship* in the Primitive Church that I am speaking of. They lifted up their Hearts, and *bowed their Knees* to their Lord in Heaven, but never dreamt of his being corporally present in the Sacrament as an Object of Adoration.

And thus I think it is very plain, That our Way and Manner of receiving the Holy Communion Kneeling, was their Way and Manner of receiving it in the Primitive Church long before there was any such thing as the Popery of Transubstantiation in the World. But then,

Secondly, This Primitive way of receiving the Holy Communion Kneeling, was indeed in Process of time (as it still is) very much abus'd in the Church of Rome.

But here I design not the Voluminous History of the Rise and Growth of Transubstantiation, how it receiv'd into the Church of Rome about 1200 years after Christ. How it was establish'd as an Article of Faith by Pope *Innocent* the Third; and as a just consequence of that, how the Adoration of the Host was decreed by his Successor Pope *Honorius* the Third.

* *Tertul. de Orat. c. 12.*

† *Cyrl. Catech. Myst.*

Such an Historical Dissertation wou'd be foreign to my present purpose, and therefore I will only plainly shew how the Case stands as to this Matter in the Church of *Rome* at this Day.

Know then, that 'tis the grand Popish Article of their Creed, That *the Body and Blood of Christ is truly, really, and substantially in the most Holy Eucharist.*

They believe (as the Fourth general * Council of *Lateran* expresses it) *That the Bread is Transubstantiated into the very Body, and the Wine into the Blood of Christ.*

And if we can stand before the Council of *Trent*, we shall hear these Thunderings.

† “ Whosoever shall deny that the Body and Blood together with the Soul and Divinity, and so whole Christ is contain'd in the Sacrament of the Eucharist: Let him be accursed.

And again, * “ Whosoever shall deny that wonderful and singular Conversion of the whole Substance of the Bread into the Body, and of the whole Substance of the Wine into the Blood of Christ, the Species only of Bread and Wine remaining, (which Conversion the Catholick Church most aptly calls Transubstantiation) Let him be accursed.

And again, † “ If any one shall say that Christ is not to be worshipped in the Eucharist with Divine Worship, &c. or that he is not solemnly to be carried about and shewed to the People that he may be worshipped, and that such Worshippers are Idolaters: Let him be accursed.

Thus they teach, yea, and thus they practise too; when the Priest has Consecrated the Host in the Church of *Rome*, * he holds it up, knee's down, and adores it; and then raising himself as high as he is able, he holds up the Host on high (& populo reverenter ostendit

Can. 1. † Sess. 13. Cap. 1. & Can. 1. * Cap. 4. & Can. 2.
Can. 6. * Rites Celebr. Missam, Cap. 8.

adorandam) and shews it reverently to the People to be ador'd.

Yea, and in the Processions (which, to promote this Adoration, are usually perform'd with very great Pomp and Magnificence, with *Bell*, and *Taper*, and *Canopy*, and *Incense*, &c.) they fall down and worship it in the very Streets.

And for the more solemn Adoration of the Host, they have a particular * *Festival*, which the *Missal* calls, *The Feast and the Solemnity of the Body of Christ*; and they have their *Forms of Adoration*, and the most *Devotional Prayers* upon this occasion.

And thus instead of the Primitive way of receiving the Bread Kneeling, they Kneel to the Bread, and Worship it, as if it was the very Christ himself.

And this is a brief and plain account of their Abuse of this Ceremony in the Church of *Rome*. but now the

Thirdly, and Lastly, I will plainly shew, That all the Abuse (which is all the Popery of it) was done away at the Reformation of the Church of *England*, and that it is here with us Reform'd and Restor'd to it's primitive Use again.

And 'tis very well known, That in the Church of *England* we are taught, that † *Transubstantiation* is repugnant to the plain words of *Scripture*, and that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's Ordinance serv'd, carry'd about, lifted up, or worshipped.

We teach indeed, That the Bread and Wine, when we consecrate, are not to be received as common Food. That to the Holy Elements sanctify'd and separated to a holy Use and Signification there's a very great respect and honour to be paid, That the Holy Table is to be approach'd with all due care and reverence, and that this sacred Feast to be celebrated with the utmost Devotion on both of our Souls and Bodies.

* Instituted by Urban IV. Anno 1264.

† Article 28.

But as for the Popish *Elevation* and *Adoration of the Host*, these are what we neither teach nor practice in our Churches.

And for your full and perfect satisfaction in this Point, I wou'd desire you at your leisure to take your *Common-prayer-Books* in your hands, and to read over and over again that excellent *Rubrick*, which you may find at the end of the *Communion Service*.

In which it is solemnly declared, That by our *Kneeling at the Holy Communion*, no adoration is intended to the *Sacramental Bread and Wine*; for that such Adoration wou'd be *Holary* to be abhorred of all faithful Christians; and therefore that we mean no more by it than the primitive Christians did, who *Kneeled* at the Holy Sacrament as we do, for a signification of our humble and grateful acknowledgment of the benefits of Christ therein given to worthy Receivers, and for the avoiding of such profanation and disorder in the Holy Communion as might otherwise ensue.

I will only add, That in this our way and manner of Receiving the Holy Communion Kneeling, we not only agree with the primitive Church, but with the best reformed Protestant Churches that have been in the World too.

Indeed the Protestant Churches of Bohemia, &c. in the sam'd * Synod of *Petrokow* complain heavily of the *Societians* (by them term'd *Arians*) for being the first Authors of *Sitting at the Lord's Table*, which they say was contrary to the Rites used in all the Reformed Churches throughout Europe: And therefore they rejected this Ceremony (as they call'd it) of *Sitting at the Lord's Table* as a very indecent, irreligious Posture, and very offensive to all well-meaning People.

And their Decree was also approved by the † Synod of *Uladislaw*, wherein this *Sitting-gesture* at the Lord's Table was strictly forbidden in all the Churches

* Held Anno 1578.

† Held Anno 1583.

of Poland, and Lithuania, &c. as a Gesture proper only to * Socinian Hereticks, &c.

In short, *Sitting at the Lord's Table* was condemn'd by these eminent Synods, as used by none but Infidels, and proper only to Socinian Hereticks; and as an indecent and irreligious, and offensive Gesture, contrary to the way of receiving the Holy Sacrament in all the Reformed Protestant Churches throughout Europe, who all receive in a Gesture of Adoration.

And all this, I hope, may be sufficient for a plain Vindication of our way and manner of receiving the Holy Communion Kneeling.

C H A P. III. Of the Wedding-Ring.

IN the former Chapters, I have plainly shew'd the Cross in Baptism, and of our way and manner of Receiving the Holy Communion Kneeling.

First, That for great and wise Reasons they were us'd in the primitive Church long before there was any such thing as Popery in the World: And,

Secondly, That in process of Time they were indecent (as they still are) very much abus'd in the Church of Rome. But then,

Thirdly, I plainly shew'd, That all these Abuses (which were all the Popery of them) were done away at the Reformation of the Church of England; and that they are here with us Reform'd and Restor'd to their pure primitive Use again.

And I will now proceed in the very same Method to give a plain Account of the *Wedding-Ring*: And therefore,

* By them call'd *Arrians*.

For wise and great Reasons was the *Wedding*-
 used in the primitive Church long before there
 any such thing as Popery in the World.
 and 'tis very well known, That Giving and Re-
 ceiving something as an Earnest, is the common way
 of making Covenants, and of striking Bargains and
 Contracts in most Cases: Indeed a Contract is usually
 thought to be very lamely and loosely made, unless
 it be an Earnest to enforce and bind it.

And thus the Matrimonial Contract is confirm'd and
 establish'd by giving and receiving of a Ring as a To-
 ken and Earnest thereof. The Parties consenting to-
 gether in Holy Wedlock, give and receive a Ring as
 a binding Pledge and Earnest, confirming the Ma-
 trimonial Covenant which they then make.

And St. *Augustine* calls the Wedding-Ring (*Ar-*
rebitus) the Earnest given by the Bridegroom to
 the Bride.

And in our Office of Marriage, *The Ring given and*
received is said to be a Token and Pledge (or Earnest) of
the Marriage and Covenant then made.

And again, in the same Office, when the Man has
 put the Ring upon the Woman's Finger, he says, *With*
this Ring I thee wed; as if he shou'd say, *With this Ring*
I now give thee as an Earnest thereof, do I confirm and
confirm the Matrimonial Covenant which we have here in
the presence of God very solemnly consented to.

And then as in other Contracts, 'tis the Way and
 manner at the giving of the Earnest to mention upon
 the Terms it is given; so in this Matrimonial Cove-
 nant at the giving of the Ring as Earnest, the Man
 states the conditions which on his part are then and
 very faithfully promised.

And so when he has given the Ring as the Earnest of
 the Marriage-Contract, saying, *With this Ring I thee*
wed. He then immediately adds with what Conditions
 he does so, viz. *With my Body I thee worship, and with*
all my worldly Goods I thee endow. Of which Conditions
 I shall

I shall be oblig'd by and by to give a plain count.

But upon this occasion I have been frequently asked *Why the Ring is put upon the Fourth Finger of the Left-hand?* To which the Answer is, because the Left-hand is generally the least used of the Two, all the Fingers of that Hand, the Ring-finger is wise the least and seldome made use of; and therefore is the Ring on that Finger worn without trouble, danger, or impediment, 'tis there out of way of business, there it hinders not any *Way of Action*, but with the greatest Safety, Ease, and convenience is it thereon kept and worn to be a constant and visible Token of that Matrimonial Covenant which ought to be had in continual remembrance.

And if we may believe the Ancients, there's something more in it than this still; for they tell you there is a Vein which goes from That Finger down to the Heart; and therefore when the Ring is put on that Finger as the Earnest confirming the Matrimonial Contract, it signifies that the Matrimonial Partners are to be sincere and cordial, and made from a true Heart; and that in this Case above all other Love to be hearty, and *without Dissimulation*, the Apostle requires Love to be.

And upon this account too is the Ring about Things wisely made use of, to be the Pledge and Earnest of this great and weighty Covenant; for all Things else, is it the most conveniently way as to be constantly and at all times visible, at hand ready and at hand to remember us of our Matrimonial Engagements.

For thus, As when God made a Covenant with *Noah*, he set his Bow in the Cloud to be the Token of that Covenant, and says expressly, *The Bow shall be in the Cloud, and I will look upon it, that I may remember my Covenant*, Gen. 9. 11, 12, 13, 14, &c.

so is the Wedding-Ring appointed to be a vi-
Token of the Matrimonial Covenant, and is in-
tended to be worn so as to be seen and looked upon,
that we may thereby be remember'd and put in mind
of that Covenant.

And again, The very Form and Figure of the Ring
itself, the Fashion of it being round and with-
out end, teaches the perpetuity and lastingness of the
Matrimonial Covenant, that the Obligations of the
wedded Persons are to have no end so long as their
Lives are continu'd, that the Bill of Divorce so com-
monly given and conniv'd at of old was a most gross
abuse of this Ordinance of God, and that *nothing but*
can part them who are joyned together in Holy Ma-
trimony, that they are not otherwise (excepting in the
case of Adultery) to be put asunder.

Thus, As the very Form and endless Figure of
the Ring denoting the Matrimonial Engagements to
have no end but Death, is an admirable admonition
and caution to us against the Divorce so commonly
practis'd of old Time; so likewise was there another
ancient abuse of Matrimony which the Wed-
ding-Ring was likewise intended to prevent.

The other abuse which I mean was this, *viz.* Men's
having and holding variety of Wives, and that not
as to the Number of them, but likewise as to
Degrees and Orders. Of which ancient abuse of
this Holy Ordinance of Matrimony, I will now en-
deavour to give a very clear and plain account; and
rather, because it will shew great Light to several
singly very odd Passages in the Old Testament, as
well as be a mighty Vindication of the Usefulness and
Necessity of the Wedding-Ring.

And that you may the better understand this mat-
ter, you may be pleased to attend with me to these
following Observations.

First, I will observe to you what a mighty regard
was had of old time to those early Promises which
God

God had made of sending his Son *the Messiah* in the World ; He had promised to our First Parents in Paradise, That *the Seed of the Woman* shou'd be bruised under the *Serpent's Head* : And the Promise was renew'd to *Abraham*, That in his Seed shou'd all the Families of the Earth be blessed, Gen. 12. 3. that is to say, That the Messiah shou'd proceed from his Loins. And from hence I observe,

Secondly, That all the Wives and Daughters of *Abraham* and his Posterity were very pregnant and full of warm Thoughts and Desires of being the Mother of that *Promised Messiah*, every one of them entertain'd great hopes and expectations, that the Promise might be born of her, as when the fulness of Time came, you believe rightly, That *He was born of the Virgin Mary*. And from hence I observe,

Thirdly, That Children were accounted the most precious and choicest Blessings of those Times, and no Blessings were desir'd with the like eagerness and diligence. The Mighty Blessing promised to *Abraham*, That *his Seed shou'd be multiply'd, as the Stars of the firmament, and as the Sand which is upon the Sea-shore*, Gen. 17. And *give me Children or else I die*, said *Rachel*, Gen. 30. 1. And when she conceived and bare a Son, she said, *God hath taken away my Reproach*, Gen. 30. 6. It seems that Barrenness was then esteemed a Reproach, and none were thought so blessed and highly favoured of God as she who was the Mother of the most numerous Offspring. For the more Children they had, and greater were their hopes that one or other of their Children might be the *Promised Messiah* ; for you will still remember, That the eager desires they were possess'd withal of having the *Promised Seed* was at the bottom of all. And from hence I observe,

Fourthly, That when the Wives did not themselves bear Children, they were content and desirous that their Husbands shou'd take, yea, they would themselves give unto their Husbands more Wives. *Sarai* gave her Handmaid *Hagar* to her Husband *Abraham*.

his Wife, Gen. 16. 3. And so again, *Rachel gave*
Handmaid Bilhah to her Husband Jacob to be his Wife,
 30. 4. And again, *Leah took Zilpah her Maid,*
gave her to her Husband Jacob to Wife, Gen. 30. 9.
 These strange Passages will be the more accountable if
 we observe,

Firstly, That these Secondary and Later Wives given
 to their Husbands were not of the same Rank and De-
 gree with the First ; there was still a vast difference as
 to the Dignity and Privileges of these different sorts of
 Wives ; for the First Wife still continu'd to be the sole
 Head of the Family. The Government of the Fa-
 mily was a Privilege which the secondary Wife had
 not to do with ; for tho' *Sarai* had given *Hagar* to
Abraham to Wife, yet *Sarai* is still called *Hagar's Mi-*
stress, Gen. 16. 4. yea, and *Hagar* is still termed *Sarai's*
Handmaid, Gen. 16. 8.

Secondly, the Children of these Secondary Wives had
 no Right of Inheritance, they were not allow'd to be
 part of their Father's Estate, but were put off with
 small Gifts or Portions ; for so *Isaac, Abraham's Son by*
his first Wife Sarai, went away with all his Father's
 Goods, Gen. 25. 5. And in the very next Verse you
 read that *Abraham gave but some Gifts or Lega-*
cies to the Sons of his Concubines, Hagar, and Keturah.
 And here you may be pleas'd to take notice by the
 use of the Word Concubine in the Old Testament,
 that it was always to be understood in the same infamous
 sense in which we now take it ; for the Secondary and
 inferior sort of Wives which I am giving an account
 of were sometimes called Concubines ; as to give an
 instance for all ; *Keturah* is expressly call'd *Abraham's*
Concubine, Gen. 25. 1. And the same *Keturah* is also expressly
 call'd *Abraham's Concubine, 1 Chron. 1. 32.* And so both
Keturah and Keturah Abraham's Secondary Wives are meant
 by the Concubines of *Abraham, Gen. 25. 5.*

And thus, As these Secondary Wives (sometimes
 call'd Concubines) had no share in the Government of
 the

the Family ; so neither had their Children any of Inheritance, *Abraham* only gave Gifts to the *his Concubines*.

Nay and farther, These Inferior Wives could ly say, That their very Children were their own they were accounted *Her's* who was the first and rior Wife and Mistress of the Family ; for so *Sarai* desir'd her Husband *Abraham* to take her *Hagar* to Wife : *It may be* (said she) *that I may Children by her*, Gen. 16. 2. And so again, when *Leah* perswaded her Husband *Jacob* to take her *Bilhah* to Wife, it was in hopes *that Bilhah might Children whom Rachel might bring up upon her Kneel her own*, Gen. 30. 3. and accordingly, when she had born *Jacob* a Son, *God hath given me a Son Rachel*, Gen. 30. 6.

And so when the Family was increas'd by the Secondary Wives ; yet still the First Wife was the Mother and Mistress of all. The very Children born to the Secondary Wives were accounted *Her's*.

And * it was for the sake of such Children that these strange Things were done. It was not to gratify their carnal Lusts and Appetites like Brute-Beasts, but to have no Understanding, that these good Men, *Abraham*, and *Jacob*, had their choice of Wives ; but was cut off an exceeding Desire that they might multiply Children as the very Stars of Heaven for Multitudes. And it was to be a Mother and Mistress of a great Number of Children, that put *Sarai* and *Rachel* upon these unusual Projects of giving to their Husbands Secondary Wives, that still they might have the more Children.

And if it be ask'd, Why the desires of having many Children were so exceedingly great in those Days ? I answer, That (as I said before) they ever hoped that one or other of these Children might be the *Promised*. The Birth of the *Promised Messiah* was still the

* *Bisshop of Ely's Commentary upon Gen. 30. 16.*

of their hopes. This was the One blest Child
 which they chiefly and principally long'd for, viz.
*Seed promised to Abraham, in which all the Nations of
 Earth was to be Blessed.*

And this is a plain Account of the ancient Abuse
 of God's Holy Ordinance of Matrimony, viz. Men's
 having and holding variety of Wives, and that not
 as to the Number of them, but also as to their
 Degrees.

And now I will proceed to shew, That this is one
 which the *Wedding-Ring* is wisely intended to
 prevent. For thus,

The Ring was anciently a Symbol and Token of ve-
 ry great Dignity and Freedom; of great Privileges and
 Liberty: As when *Pharaoh* advanced *Joseph* to be
 second-self, as it were, even the Second Man in
 Kingdom, *He put a Ring upon Joseph's Hand*, as a
 sign and Testimony of that Dignity and Authority
 which he then gave him, *Gen. 41. 42.*

And again, When *Mordecai* was advanced by King
Ahasuerus, *The King gave him a Ring*, as a Sign and
 Token of that Authority and Greatness, to which he
 preferr'd him, *Esth. 8. 2.*

And again, in the New Testament, when the Pro-
 phet's Son was receiv'd into his Father's House and Fa-
 mily, and was re-instated in all the Privileges and Im-
 munities of his Sonship, *He had a Ring put on his Hand*,
 as a sign and Testimony thereof, *Luke 15. 22.*

And accordingly when a Ring is given as the Pledge
 or Token of the Matrimonial Contract, the Woman
 thereby entitled to all the Honour and Privileges of
 an *Honourable Estate*. The Ring given to her is a Te-
 stimony that she is not then wedded to be a Slave or
 a Woman as the Inferior Wives of old were, but
 to enjoy all the Favour and Privileges, all the Autho-
 rity and Right of governing in the Family, which the
 first and principal Wives then had.

And

And that this is one wise design of the Ring to be intimated in that excellent Prayer in our *Matrimony-Office*; where we pray, That as *Isaac and Rebecca* lived faithfully together, so the persons then married surely perform and keep the Vow and Covenant between them made, whereof the Ring given and received is a Token Pledge.

For the understanding of which, you must know That tho' *Abraham* and *Jacob*, according to the custom of their Times and Country, had their various Wives, as I have now shewn you; yet this was no Abuse of the State of Matrimony, which the good God was never guilty of: He did not take, nor did his *Becca* give to him any other Wife: No, but for all other, he kept him only to her.

And thus, As *Isaac* and *Rebecca* lived faithfully together, so are they oblig'd to do, who give and receive the Ring as the Pledge and Token of the Matrimonial Covenant; for when the Ring confirms the Contract, will admit of no such Secondary Wives as were anciently call'd Concubines. The Ring is a Testimony of Freedom and Authority, and intimates the honourable Conditions with which the Woman is married to the Man: That she is not married as a *garr* or a *Bilhah*, who were *Abraham* and *Jacob*'s inferior Wives; but as a *Rebecca*, who was the only Wife of her Husband, and had all the Love, and Honour and Privileges, to which the Honourable Estate of Matrimony did entitle her.

And again, That the Ring is wisely intended to prevent this Abuse of Matrimony which I have been speaking of; I mean the Abuse which gave Men the liberty of having an Inferior sort of Wives: That the Ring was intended to prevent this Abuse farther to be intimated in the Office of Matrimony viz. In the Conditions with which the Ring is given by the Man; then saying, *With my Body I thee endow with all my worldly Goods I thee endow.*

By which conditions, as he gives her an Interest in his Estate, and a Right to a just share in all his worldly Possessions ; so likewise does he entitle her to the Privileges of his Quality in the World, and to all the Honours belonging to his Person.

But because there is thought to be some difficulty in these Words, *With my Body I thee worship* : Therefore I will here take occasion to give a more particular account of them.

First then, *With my Body* ; that is, with *my Self*, *my Person* ; for what more common than to say, every body knows this or that thing : In which and the like expressions *Every Body* is as much as to say, *Every Man, every One*. And so here by *Body* you must understand *Man's Self, his Person*. Well, but,

Secondly, The grand difficulty is in the word *Worship* : *With my Body I thee Worship*. What can be meant by *Worship* ? I Answer, That nothing more is meant by it than a *Civil Respect and Honour*.

And indeed, That the English Word, *Worship*, very frequently signifies no more, is plain from the Titles of *Worshipful*, and *Right Worshipful*, which are commonly and very justly given to some of the Higher Ranks and Degrees of Men amongst us.

And so we read of *Worshipping* not only God, but King : *They Worshipped the Lord, and the King*, *1 Chron. 29. 20.* that is, they gave unto God the *Worship* that was his ; and they gave unto the King the *Worship* that in a lower sense was due to him too.

And so again, Where we read of Man's being crowned with Glory and *Honour*, *Psal. 8. 5.* in the better Translation of the Psalms the Words are, That he was Crowned with Glory and *Worship*, so that *Worship* and *Honour* must signify the same thing.

And I will only farther observe, That the Word *Worship* is used in the very same sense in the New Testament likewise ; for so when a Man bidden to a Feast is exhorted to take the lowest Room, that the Master

of the Feast may say unto him, Friend, Go up higher it follows that *then shall he have Worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with him.* Worship, that is, Honour, Luke 14. 10.

And thus in the Words, *With my Body I thee Worship* By *Worship*, is to be meant no more than Honour.

And now the Terms thus explain'd, the true meaning of these Words (*With my Body I thee Worship*) thus. *With my Person, or together with my self I do Honour*; and that is as much as to say,

I take thee into the same degree of Honour with my self whatsoever my Rank or Degree is in the World, whatsoever Respect or Honour is due to my Person, I take thee in participation of it.

For instance; supposing the Bridegroom to be a Prince, by these Words, *With my Body I thee Worship* He makes his Bride a Princess, and so down through all Degrees and Estates of Men. The Woman is married into the same degree of *Quality* with the Man: is to be *Worshipped*, that is, *Honoured* together with himself.

And thus you see that these Words in the true meaning of them are directly against that Abuse of Matrimony before-mention'd, when Men had their inferior Wives, who had no interest either in the Estate or Honour of their Husbands.

And 'tis very true, That the Honourable Estate of Matrimony allows of no such Concubines, but the Woman is to be *Worshipped* with the Man's Honour. She is married into the same Degree and Rank of Nobility. *With his Body he does her Worship*; that is, the Honour due to his Person he adds to her's likewise, in this respect they Two become as One.

And for a Testimony and Confirmation of all this he puts a *Ring* upon her Hand, which has ever

* Hooker Eccl. Pol. L. 5. Sect. 73.

seem'd a Sign and Symbol of great Dignity and Privileges, as I before shew'd you.

And by what I have now plainly said, I hope you understand with what great Wisdom and Reason *the Ring is given and received as the Pledge or Earnest of the Matrimonial Covenant.*

And if you (my honest Countrey-Men) are in no doubt for confirming every ordinary Contract with a Pledge or Earnest; then certainly neither can there be any Fault in confirming this great and weighty Contract of Matrimony with such a proper and fit Pledge or Earnest, as I have now shewn the *Wedding-Ring* to be.

Sure I am, That the Ring was acknowledg'd and us'd at a fit Pledge or Earnest of the Matrimonial Covenant both by Jews and Gentiles, as well as by the primitive Christians.

The Ring of Espousing was us'd with great Solemnity among the Jews; and * *Tertullian* speaks of the use of it among the Ancient *Romans*; and tells us expressly, That it was no part of their *Heathenism*, but for just Reasons was the use of it continued under Christianity it self even in it's purest state.

For so we learn from that very ancient Writer † *Clement Alexandrinus*; * *St. Augustine* (as I observ'd before) calls it *Arrham Sponsi*, the Bridegroom's Earnest given to the Bride. † *St. Jerome* speaks of it once and again.

And I will not trouble you with any farther Testimonies; for after such a full and plain Account as I have now given of the Usefulness and Expediency of the *Wedding-Ring*, I think the fewer Testimonies sufficient to assure you, That it was us'd in the primitive Church long before there was any such thing as *Poetry* in the World. But now then,

pol. Cap. 6. † Pad. L. 3. c. 11. * Aug. Tr. 2. in 1 Ep. Johan. upon Job c. 8. and on Isa. 3.

Secondly, I will briefly shew, that in Process of time it was indeed, as it still is, very much abus'd in the Church of *Rome*.

Of which Abuses of the Wedding-Ring in the Church of *Rome*, we have a brief account given in a late excellent * Treatise, and I will search no further; for I take no great delight in enquiring into Fopperies of that Church: I will only set down what that excellent Author has observ'd in the Popish Office of Matrimony.

" In which the Wedding-Ring (says he) is
 " blessed with *Two Prayers*; in the former of which
 " God is beseeched to *send his Blessing on the Ring*,
 " *she who shall wear it may be armed with the Power of*
 " *Heavenly Defence, and that it may be beneficial to her*
 " *Eternal Life, through Christ our Lord.*

" And in the *Latter*, the Priest crossing himself
 " prayeth, *that God would bless the Ring*, which (says he)
 " *we in thy Holy Name bless, that whosoever shall wear it*
 " *may abide in his Peace, &c.*

" Next Holy Water is sprinkled upon the Ring.

" And Lastly, The Bridegroom puts it upon the
 " Bride's *Thumb*, saying, *In the Name of the Father*
 " Then upon her *Second Finger*, saying, *and of the Son*
 " Then on the *Third*, saying, *And of the Holy Ghost*
 " Then on the *Fourth*, saying *Amen*.

And these are the Impious and Superstitious Practices about the Ring; these are the Abuses of it in the Church of *Rome*. And now then,

Thirdly, I will briefly shew that all these Abuses (which were all the Popery of it) were done away by the Reformation of the Church of *England*, and that it is here with us Reform'd and Restor'd to its primitive Use again.

* Case of Symbolizing, &c.

† Juxta Usum Ecclesię Sarisburiensis.

And you well know, That in our Office of Marriage, we have no such conjuring doings; we have no juggling Tricks as the Priests of the Church of Rome make use of; we do not foolishly bless, or pray to bless the Ring; we have no *Holy-Water* (as they call't) to sprinkle it withal; we do not think or say that there is any Mystery in putting it first upon the Bride's Thumb, and then upon the Second Finger, and then upon the Third, and then upon the Fourth: No, this is the Magick and Witchcraft used in the Church of *Rome*, and we have no such silly and ridiculous Customs in the Church of *England*.

We only use the Ring, as for great and wise Reason it was used in the primitive Church; viz. As a Token and Pledge, or Earnest of the Matrimonial Contract.

And whether I have not now shewn you, that it is a fit and proper Pledge and Earnest thereof, judge the People.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Surplice.

AS I have already shewn of the *Cross in Baptizing-Ring*: So I will now proceed to shew of *Surplice*,

First, That for great and wise Reasons it was in the primitive Church, long before there was any thing as Popery in the World: And,

Secondly, That in process of time it was indeed it still is) very much abus'd in the Church of Rome. But then,

Thirdly, and *Lastly*, I will plainly shew, That all Abuses (which were all the Popery of it) were away at the Reformation of the Church of England: and that it is here with us Reform'd and Restor'd to its pure primitive Use again.

First then, the Surplice for great and wise Reasons was used in the Primitive Church, long before there was any such as Popery in the World.

And I shall very briefly dispatch what I shall to say as to this matter: For if every Man must bear his own burthen; then surely the Use of the Surplice is only to be answer'd for by them that wear it: it is no concern of the common People; they have nothing to answer for at the Day of Judgment upon this Account. Our wearing the Surplice shall not be laid to their Charge. I pray God Almighty that no other Sins may rise up against them at that dreadful Day, and then I am sure that they shall never will; when they are judg'd, they shall be condemn'd of the Lord.

Nay, but let the Ministers alone for this, they must answer for't at God's flaming Tribunal.

at Day ; and the Good God grant that then and
 ere they may have nothing worse to answer for ; for
 we be accus'd of no worse things when we come to
 be try'd for our Eternal Lives , I do stedfastly believe
 that the Lord will have mercy upon our Souls.

But pray now let me ask, May not Ornament and
 distinction be justly reckon'd among the very Aims
 and Ends of Apparel ? It is certainly one design of
 our Garments not only to distinguish between Men
 and Women, but also between the different Ranks
 and Degrees of Men themselves.

God hath said to one Man, *Sit thou here, and take the*
upper Room : He hath said to another, *Friend go up*
higher : And these at the higher End are justly dis-
 tinguish'd in their very Garb and Attire from those at
 the lower End of the World.

For thus, Is it not fit that Kings and Princes shou'd
 on many occasions distinguish themselves by their
 Royal Robes : It has been thought meet and decent
 for all wise People (and none but a few wild Qua-
 nts have deny'd it) that Men should be attir'd accord-
 ing to their Rank and Station in the World.

They who are in King's Houses wear soft Raiment, says
 our Saviour ; and he does not blame them for it, *Mat.*
23. They wear soft Raiment ; that is, as it is inter-
 preted, *Luke 7. 25. They are gorgeously apparel'd*. The
 eminency of their Rank and Degree is illustrated and
 made conspicuous by their precious Cloaths.

And thus the good *Joseph*, when he was in *Pharaoh's*
 Court, was array'd in vestures of fine linnen, *Gen. 41. 12.*

And we do not only read of the Royal Apparel
 of King *Abasuerus* us'd to wear, *Esth. 6. 8.* But when
Mordecai was advanc'd in that King's Court, even that
Mordecai likewise had an Apparel of Blue (or as it is in
 the Margin, of Violet) and White, and a Garment of
 Linen and Purple, *Esth. 8. 15.*

We are told of some Noblemen who were brought up
 in Scarlet, *Lament. 4. 5.*

And even the Prophet *Daniel* when he was made the Third Ruler in King *Belshazzar's* Kingdom : He was clothed with Scarlet, Dan 5. 29.

And thus it has been in all Nations : Men of different Dignities and Degrees have had their peculiar Vestures of Distinction. And thus it is among ourselves ; our Judges and other chief Officers ; our Lord Mayors and Aldermen, &c. have their Scarlet and Furrs, and Vestures proper to their Ranks and Offices.

And now if it be so usual and commendable in our Officers and Ministers of the State to be dignified and distinguish'd by their respective Garbs, Why then why for God's sake may not the Ministers and Officers of the Church be so too ? They were once so distinguished by the command of God himself, God's Ministers in the Ancient Jewish Church had their peculiar and proper Vestures by God's own Appointment.

And it has been well observ'd, That in 1 *Tim.* 3 where it is requir'd, that a Bishop in the Christian Church be of good Behaviour : The Original word *κόσμιον*, and may as well denote an Ornamentality and Comeliness in his Habit, as in his behaviour.

And let me reason this matter a little calmly and closely : Do you think that the Furrs and Scarlet of our Judges and Mayors, &c. are of no significance ? Nay, but are they not Badges and Ensigns of the Height and Dignity of their Offices ? And consequently, may they not serve to remind us of the Respect and Honour that we owe them ? Yea, and to remind themselves too, that they shou'd do no mean or unworthy things, nothing unworthy of their respective Dignities and Places : As their distinguishing Garbs draw all Men's Eyes upon them, they are thereby remember'd to let their Lights so shine before Men, that they may see their good Works.

And thus, to the same pious and good Ends is the
 Surplice enjoin'd to be the distinguishing Garb of the
 Ministers officiating in the Church, viz. this White
 garment may in some measure denote the Dignity
 of our Function ; and if you please, good People,
 may admonish you of the Respect and Esteem that's
 due to us, and to our Ministration.

As Joseph's Vesture of White Linnen signify'd him to
 be one of the King's chief and principal Officers : Even
 the Surplice in like manner may denote them that
 are to be the Ministers and Officers of God ; and
 consequently, that you ought so to account of them, as the
 Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. 4. 1. and to esteem them very high-
 ly for their work's sake, as the same Apostle en-
 joins, 1 Thess. 5. 13.

But I'll say no more of this, it shall content me
 to have but softly nam'd it.

Only I will add, That White is an Emblem of Pu-
 rity : As the Elders about the Throne in Heaven were
 presented as clothed in white Rayment, Revel. 4. 4. and
 in this sense the Spouse of Christ is said to be arrayed
 in the Linnen, clean and white ; for as it expressly fol-
 lows, The fine Linnen is the righteousness of Saints,
 Revel. 19. 8.

And thus may the White Garment (*the Surplice*)
 denote the Purity of that Holy Religion which in a
 special manner is Our great concern and busi-
 ness, and may admonish us that we ought to take heed
 of ourselves, and to our Doctrine, that we may neither
 neglect nor practise any thing that is unworthy of our
 Function, or that may any ways sully, or de-
 stain, or blemish either our selves or our pro-
 fession.

And as * St. Chrysostom admonishes the Clergy, we
 must not think it enough that we wear the White Garment :

Mat. 23. in Mat.

No,

No, but we must hence take occasion to remember selves of that internal purity of Mind and Soul, we must make us shine in the Eyes of God.

And this admonition of that Ancient Father in plain Testimony that *the Surplice* was the distinguishing Garment of the Officiating Clergy in his Days.

And * *St. Hierom* tells us yet more particularly the *Bishop, Priest, and Deacon*, that at the time of sacred Administrations, they were all in *White Garments*.

And that *the Surplice* was used by the Bishops at *St. Cyprian's* time, and even by *St. Cyprian* himself pretty clearly intimated by † *Pontius* the Deacon (mistake him not) for to be covered with Linne styl'd by him *Episcopatus honor*, the Episcopal Honour.

And thus 'tis a Truth establish'd by the mouth of Two or Three Witnesses, (and I cou'd have produced more, even a whole * Council) that the Surplice pious and good reasons was used in the primitive Church long before there was any such thing as popery in the World.

God's Ministers in the Church were dignify'd distinguish'd with these White Garments, as the Kings Judges and other Ministers in the State are dignify'd and distinguish'd with their Furrs and Scarlet-Robes; and what Fault or Popery there can be in the more than in the other, I could never yet learn. But then,

Secondly, I am to shew, That the Surplice piously and innocently used in the primitive Church was indeed in process of time (as it still is) very abus'd in the Church of *Rome*.

* *Advers. Pelag. l. i. c. 9.*

† *In Vit. Cypr.*

* *Conc. Carth. 4. Can. 41.*

And of this *the Missal* gives us this Account. Why
before a Surplice can be worn in that Church,
must have a Bishop (or one allow'd by him) to con-
secrate and bless it.

And in a very solemn manner is it to be hal-
lowed with I know not how many strange Prayers,
that, for instance, it may defend him who wears it,
from all the Assaults of the Devil, &c.

And then to make the solemnity look like Sor-
cery and Charm, these wild Prayers are still far-
ther accompany'd with abundance of fine Tricks and
foolings.

And then Lastly, That *the Surplice* may be thoroughly
hallow'd, it must undergo that common Foolery of
being sprinkled with Holy Water.

And thus is it abus'd egregiously in the Church of
our. But now then,

Thirdly, and Lastly, I will shew, That all these
Uses (which were all the Popery of it) were done
away at the Reformation of the Church of *England*;
and that it is here with us Reform'd and Restor'd to
its pure primitive Use again.

And 'tis very well known, that we have no such
solemnity used in our Church, as that of conse-
crating the Surplice by any Bishop, or hallowing it
with Prayers, that it may have the force of Charm
to conjure down the Devil, &c.

Nor do we use any Crossings or Foolings upon any
such Occasion.

Nor do we sprinkle it with Holy Water.

We only wear it (as the Ministers of the primitive
Church did) as a distinguishing Garment, to denote
the Dignity of our Function, and the Purity of our
Religion: To remember the People so to account of us
as of the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mys-
tery of God, 1 Cor. 4. 1. And to remember our selves,
that

that (as one of the * Canons of our Church express it) *we ought to excel others in purity of Life, and so be examples to the People to live well and Christianly; and that we ought indeed (as was John the Baptist) to burning and shining Lights, Joh. 5. 35.*

And now it does not, that I know of, give any Offence, that our Judges, &c. have their distinct and proper Garments in our Courts of Judicature; and therefore they who take offence at the Minister's wearing a like distinguishing Garment in the Church, they are offended surely without Cause, and without Reason.

Again, Whoever yet renounc'd his Freedom and Privileges in a Corporation, because the Officers belonging to it have their peculiar Habits of distinction? And why then shou'd any renounce their Freedom and Privileges in the Church of God upon the account of *their* Vesture, who are the Ministers and Officers belonging to that Church?

Once more, It wou'd be an Instance of the most egregious folly in them that are afflicted with the King's-Evil, shou'd they refuse to be touch'd and cured by the King, *because they are not pleas'd with his Royal Robes.* And yet this is the present Case; we have Wounds, and Bruises, and putrifying Sores, as the Prophet calls Men's Sins; and of these we are to be healed by the King of Kings. But now then, why that Eternal King wou'd apply the healing Remedy by the hands of a spiritual Physician, can there be any greater folly than for Men to refuse the Remedy *because they like not the Physician's Garment?*

I love and study to speak plain; and yet I hope that I take some care to keep within a just decorum in the frequent Comparisons, Similitudes, and familiar Expressions, which I am wont to make use of

* Can. 75.

excuse me therefore but the supposition of one plain
 story more, and I'll have done.

There were a Company of poor People very hungry
 and ready to starve, begging at a Rich Man's Gates :
 Well, and the Rich Man had compassion on them,
 and very kindly and charitably invited them into his
 house, and to a very plentiful Entertainment at his
 Table : And now one wou'd have thought that
 the poor Creatures shou'd have rejoic'd exceedingly,
 and with great thankfulness have accepted of the Rich
 Man's seasonable Relief : Whereas on the quite con-
 trary, Oh, Sir, said they, we dare not come within
 your Doors ; we must not approach your Table. Why,
 shou'd the Rich Man, What ! do you think my House
 is infected, or that my Meat is poison ? No, no,
 they, Good Sir, Your House and your Meat with-
 out doubt are very good ; but to tell you the plain
 truth, we dare not come into your House, or to your
 Table, *because we like not the Colour of your Servant's*
series, who attend and wait in your House, and at
 your Table.

And was not this surprizing ? Or what think you ?
 And these nice Fools deserve to be pity'd, or to be
 punish'd at ?

And yet you know the People who shun the House
 and Table of God for the same wise Reason, *they*
like not the Colour of his Servant's Garb ; I mean,
 they will not be invited into the House, or to the
 Table of God, because they like not *the White Gar-*
ment, in which his Ministers officiate, and attend, and
 wait in his House, and at his Table. But enough of

And now I am almost ready to flatter my self, that
 I have set before you all our accused Ceremonies in a
 very clear Light ; and that you now plainly see how
 unreasonably and unreasonably they have been Ar-
 gued, and Judg'd, and Condemn'd as Popish. For,

For great and wise Reasons they were used in primitive Church long before there was any such thing as Popery in the World ; and tho' 'tis true, that process of time they were indeed (as they still are) very much abus'd in the Church of *Rome*, yet all the Abuses (which were all the Popery of them) were d away at the Reformation of the Church of *England* and they are here with us Reform'd and Restor'd to their pure primitive Use again.

And as for the Wise, the Learned, and Good Men, who were the Reformers of our Church, I assure you, that many of them dy'd Martyrs in *Queen Mary's* Days ; and you know they were no Papists who were then Martyr'd and Burnt : Nay, but for their Blood which was then shed by Popish hands bears a sufficient Testimony to their Reformation that it was free from Popery.

And then again in the late Reign, one would have thought that the Reformed Church of *England* could never more have been accus'd of Popery. For,

I am very confident that you, good People, did not then think the Bishops to be Papists when they were clapt up in the Tower.

And who but the Clergy of the Church of *England* were then the Defenders of the Protestant Religion against all the Accusations and Books of the *Romans* and Jesuits?

In the * *Catalogue of Discourses publish'd against Popery in the late King James's Reign*, there were *Two hundred and Twenty eight* Books written by the Members of the Church of *England*, and but † *Three* by the Dissenters of all sorts.

Nay, and don't you remember who were compar'd to Scaffolds, which the Undertakers to the Church of *Rome* made use of.

* Printed by R. Baldwin, Anno 1689.

† Reckoning *H. Care's* Modest Enquiry, &c. for one.

at I forbear, and will conclude with a Passage
 which you may find in the beginning of your Com-
 mon-Prayer-Books, in the Account of Ceremonies, *why*
some be abolished, and some retained.

Although the Keeping or Omitting of a Ceremo-
 ny (in it self consider'd) is but a small thing; yet
 the wilful and contemptuous Transgression and
 breaking of a common Order and Discipline, is no
 small offence before God; *Let all things be done*
among you, faith St. Paul, in a seemly and due order.
 The appointment of the which Order pertaineth not
 to private Men; therefore no Man ought to take in
 hand, or presume to appoint or alter any Publick
 common Order in Christ's Church, except he
 lawfully called and authorized thereunto.

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